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Relation of the history class to the community

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THE RELATION OF THE HISTORY CLASS TO THE COMMUNITY

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Outline

Chapter I

Introduction

It is a well-known fact among educators that for each subject placed in the school curriculum, there must be a corresponding aim or aims. The teacher must not only know his subject, but must have clearly fixed in his mind those things which he expects his pupils to learn from their study of the subject. The question of aims is an all important one because on it depends the method the teacher will use in order to derive the benefits which a study of that particular subject will give. Without well formulated objectives, the teaching will necessarily be more or less haphazard, and the benefits derived few if any.

The aims set up for the teaching of history are both numerous and varied, both general and specific. Before the World War, Professor Henry Johnson had noted some thirty-nine different objectives claimed for the teaching of history.(1) It is a foregone conclusion that such a subject, which permits of

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(1) Johnson, Henry--"Characteristic Elemtnets of Social Studies"--The Historical Outlook XIII cited in Wirth, F. "Ultimate Objectives and Goals of Achievement for History in the Public Schools"--Historical Outlook 19:120-1 March, 1928, 117-19

be derived from a study of it, will be taught in manifold ways. A teacher whose only aim is the memorization of a series of isolated facts will attack his subject in an entirely different way from that which the teacher who is striving to teach his pupils the value of historical evidence, likewise the teacher whose aim is the inculcation of a taste for historical literature will approach his subject in a far different way than the teacher whose purpose is to teach his pupils how to become good American citizens. Many of the values which some enthusiasts claim are derived from a study of history can be ascribed equally as well to other subjects in the school curriculum, to wit, the claim that the study of history will arouse intense patriotism may also be cited by teachers of civics. "Entertainment, inspiration, ideals of life and conduct," says Professor Johnson, "may no doubt with profit be sought in history, but they may also with profit be sought in other subjects, and, indeed if history is taken at all seriously, with even greater profit."(2) "We no longer go to history for lessons

(2) Johnson, H.--Teaching of History, page 62

in morals, nor for good examples of conduct, nor yet for dramatic nor picturesque scenes. We understand that for all these purposes legend would be preferable to history, for it presents a chain of causes and effects more in accordance with our ideas of justice, more perfect and heroic characters, finer and more affecting scenes."(3) It is, therefore, the first duty of the teacher of history to select from this maze of objectives those which seem to be at the same time most pertinent and most logical. The aims which I have chosen for my discussion in this paper may not be the most important objectives in history teaching, but they are certainly three very important objectives, and although of these, two might be obtained from a study of other subjects in the curriculum, they can best be obtained from a carefully planned well taught course in history. These aims are: first, to furnish the pupil with proper historical information, second, to broaden his concepts of life, and third, to inspire him with proper civic attitudes and ideals. The first it goes without saying is peculiar to history,

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(3) Langlois and Seignobos--Introduction to the Study of History, page 331--quoted in Johnson, op. loc., pg. 63

and is fundamental to the accomplishment of the other two. The second, it may be argued, may be realized from a study of good literature. But the amount of good literature which a child reads during his school years is small, while even if he takes but one course in history, the pupils 'sees man in every possible human activity or relationship--in war and in peace; in the throes of defeat and in the joys of victory; in selfish aggrandizement and in unselfish sacrifice of life that right may prevail. There is not a human situation that is not stirred by its narrative. To study history responsively is to acquire a sympathetic understanding of human life, nay, to share in that life itself. The socializing influence of history on youth is direct and potent."(4) Likewise it may be argued that the third objective is the one usually ascribed to a course in civics. But a course in civics does not offer the wide background of historical knowledge which one receives from a course in history, and which serves to give a basis for the acquisition of those attitudes and ideals which all good American citizens should pssess.

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(4) Klapper, Paul--The Teaching of History page 26

The purpose of this thesis is to show that the above-mentioned objectives in history can and should be attained through the integration of the school and the community. "Apart from its social service function the school would have scant justification. As the guiding intelligence of the community it should bring into use whatever has been produced that is socially useful. We cannot rest content with the old idea that all that is necessary to keep a community going forward is to set up organizations and 'let the people do the rest." The people are paying out their hard-earned money for actual help, not for empty organizations that will "let them do it." They are willing to pay for the scientific training of their children, and to cooperate in education in the hope of greater financial success and fuller, richer, and happier lives. The school can make a great contribution to community welfare. Only of late years have we come to appreciate the great wealth we have in pupil resources. The strength and virtue of twenty million of our youth arrayed in the cause of civic betterment offers possibilities almost incalculable. The reaction is also beneficial to the

school. It prevents its isolation, and makes transition from school to society easy and gradual. The school life takes on a new meaning and a new vitality. Finally, there is provided a means of keeping up civic activities during the vacation period when the school has often ceased to function or to have influence.'

Chapter II

The Attainment of Proper Historical Knowledge

If it is granted that the first duty of the American public schools is to turn out good American citizens, it is first of all necessary to consider the proper way of going about such a task. Before the student can have practice in the duties of citizenship by participation, he must first of all know what are the duties of a good American citizen. "Without much background of historical information the student has no means of interpreting social conditions. He must study the past in order to understand how the present came into being. To understand this development facts are necessary, not facts in isolation but in relation to other facts. This will enable him to see the process of development over a long period of time. This should help him to orientate himself and see his place in a changing world. It should help the student to understand and appreciate our institutions which are the result of centuries of human endeavor and achievement. It should make him tolerant toward changes which seem to be in the very nature of things, and yet because of his knowledge and understanding of the contribution of other times and peoples it will tend to curb extreme radicalism

and lead to sympathy and respect for both their and our institutions. The student should thus acquire a broader outlook which will remove ignorance, prejudice, and provincialism."[5] The first aim of any history teaching then, is what Professor Johnson calls making the world intelligable.[6] It goes without saying that the information which is needed to make the world intelligable should, as far as possible, be concerned with facts which tie up with our present day questions, problems, and solutions.[7] Granted that some historical information is fundamental before any attempt is made to fulfill the other aims of history teaching, the question then arises as to what is the best method of imparting this historical information. The old method was to present to the pupil a mass of dates, lengthy lists of battles, names of scores of historical characters, and after leading

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(5) Wirth, F. P.--"Ultimate Objectives and Goals of Achievement for History in the Public Schools" Historical Outlook, 19:120-1, Mar. (20, 117

(6) Johnson, op. loc., page 75

(7) See Johnson, op. loc., page 81

him into this maze, withdraw and let him extricate himself as best he could. The result was fatal. History was made purely a memoritor subject, hated by the pupils. From this extreme there have been some teachers who have gone so far to the opposite side that they have refused to teach any definite facts. This postition is as stupid as the other. Facts are necessary, and the way I propose to impart them to the students is by thoroughly motivating the work. The term motivation needs some explanation. How often we hear pupils say, " "Why must I take United States History? I am going to be a stenographer and what relation is there between stenography and history?" Another pupil may be planning on becoming a hairdresser and will not be able to understand the necessity of studying history. If the teacher of history is thoroughly trained in the technique of motivation, he will be able to make the course in history so full of meaning, so purposeful to his pupils that they will see a reason for their studying it, and a need for the study of it regardless of what their future position will be. Motivation, then, is 'that attack upon school work wylch seeks to make its tasks significant and purroseful to each child by relating them to his childish experiences, questions, problems,

and desires." There are several good ways to motivate the teaching of history.(9) History lends itself especially well to dramatization and the interest of almost any class can be aroused by re-living the scenes of history. The attempt to solve a present day problem is another method much used in motivating the history lesson. Although there are other ways of motivating the teaching of history, these are perhaps the most popular and most widely used in our schools today. A still higher degree of motivation may be accomplished by adding to either or both of these methods another element, namely, the community interest. It is possible for the history teacher to make much of the work purposeful and full of meaning both to the pupils and to members of the community. This can be done in various ways.

At the beginning of the year when the interest of the pupils is not yet fully aroused, the teacher could arrange for a well-known foreigner to give a lecture to the pupils. This can be made very effective if the speaker will consent to appear in native costume. If it is impossible to obtain a

(8) Wilson, Guy--The Motivation of School Work, pg. 15

(9) Wilson, op. loc., chap. 5--discusses methods of motivating history

native of a foreign country, a well-informed man who has traveled widely in a foreign country will do, or even one who has traveled widely in our own country. The teacher should announce to the pupils in advance that on a certain day this lecturer is coming to their school, and he should by hints infer that they are going to have a real treat when he comes.(10) The pupils should be told to invite their parents. It is very important that the speaker be informed of the purpose in having him come to the school. For in this way, much superfluous and irrational material can be dispensed with, and with a definite objective in view, the speaker can arrange his lecture so that the pupils will get the most out of it.

It is always possible to arrange for a debate between members of the history class, and other classes in the school. In a city whose interest is shoe manufacture it would be possible to arrange for a debate on the tariff bill. The teacher might even suggest to the pupils that they write to their local representative in Congress to send them a report of the tariff as it now stands. This information

(10) See Wilson, Lyte, Hull--Modern Methods in Teaching chap. 9

given by a well-known community member would not only interest them, but would greatly interest their parents, and a debate of this kind would attract a great many members of the community who would not come to other school affairs.

Another way to motivate the history work is by forming a history club. Pupils in junior high school and senior high school are always interested in clubs, and the club idea is one which is much used today. "School clubs in some way resemble the informal education of old Greece where the master was one with his pupils who clustered about him in small groups and, with a common interest at heart, developed wisdom and character."(11) To be successful, the history club must have a definite objective. It may be an extra curricular activity or it is entirely possible to hold one meeting a week in the regular class room period. In the former case not all pupils taking history would belong. In the latter, of necessity all enrolled members of the class in history would be members of the history club. The objective might be the same in either type, although it

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(11) "Clubs"--bulletin pub. by the Washington Junior High School, Rochester, N. Y.--quoted in Myers, George E.--<u>The Problem of Vocational Guidance</u>

would be possible to have more than one type of history club if conducted as an extra-curricular affair. For instance in a book by Thomas-Tindal and Myers there is a chapter devoted to a list of appropriate clubs for all departments in the curriculum, and here one will find described two kinds of history clubs, one called the Historical Research Club, and the other the Historical Pilgramage Club. The aim of the first is "to enable young students to get a right perspective on events of the day by showing the relation of these events to happenings of the historic past. To show how man has improved his living conditions and raised his political, social, and ethical standards and to encourage optimistic belief in still greater future betterment."(12) Among the activities for this club are such things as reading up one topic in several different magazines in order to prove to the pupils that it is wiser to base our final conclusions on more than one historical account. The authors of this book suggest that this club invite the other school clubs to attend movies and slides of recent historical events. I would suggest that in addition to inviting other clubs, that members of the community be also invited.

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(12) Thomas-Tindal and Myer, Junior High School Life pg.

The other historical club described in this book takes full cognizance of the importance of community and school relationships. The aims of this Historical Pilgrimage Club is "to develop in the children of Philadelphia (and here the name of any city might be substituted) a feeling of civic pride in the institutions and history of their native city. To give the vividness of reality to historical information by taking youg students to the actual places where our city's history was made." The activities include "pilgrimages to various points of historic interest in and around Philadelphia, the order in which the trips are taken conforming as nearly as possible to the historic sequence of the events associated with each locality. Historic periods rather than dates are thus emphasized, and detached facts are given a "local habitation and a name."[13] An itinerary of such a club is as follows:

Caves along the Wissahickon made in early attempts to find gold.

Old Swedes Church--(1643)

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(13) Thomas-Tindal and Myer, op. loc., pgs. 229-232

Fountain Green--home of John Mifflin--(1680)

Penn's House--(1682)

Penn Treaty Park--(1682)

Penn Charter School--(1689)

Christ Church--(1731)

Bartram's House and Gardens--(1731)

Independence Hall--(1741)

Belmont Mansion--(1742)

Sower Publishing House

Pennsylvania Hospital--(1755)

Germantown Academy

Home of David Rittenhouse

Betsy Ross House

Chew Mansion--(1777)

Franklin's Grave--(1790)

Lemon Hill Mansion--(Robert Morris)

Mount Pleasant (Washington's Retreat)

Home of Benedict Arnold

Home of Rebecca Frank (of Mischianza fame)

Home of Judge Peters--(1812)

Girard College--(1848)

Grant's Cabin--(1861)

With a club like this organized and managed properly, the relationship between the school and community could not help but be strengthened, and some of the trips might be open to community members. In the case of a city which has many places of historical interest, a club of this kind would train several of the pupils to act as guides to visitors to the city.

If the history club is restricted to a regular classroom meeting once a week there might be fewer opportunities for school and community connections, but some there undoubtedly could be. The objectives of this type of club might be to discuss a present day question which is of local significance. An objective of this type would necessitate a knowledge of community interests and needs and pupils would be encouraged to ask the opinion of community members. Parents of pupils in the class should be invited to attend any of these club meetings, and other members of the community should be brought in from time to time. Any type of history club could have a guest night when a historic playlet preferably but not necessarily

composed by a member of the club could be presented in the school auditorium. Alice I. Hazeltine, in a book called Plays for Children has given brief abstracts from historical plays and pageants which are suitable for production by school children. Such a play is Christopher Columbus by A. J. Walker, and published by Holt. Miss Hazeltine says of this play: "Supported in his great enterprise by the wisdom and resources of Queen Isabella, Columbus sails across the unknown seas, and to Castile and Leon gives a New World. "Winsor's Irving's and Adam's works on Columbus have been among the historical sources consulted for the purpose of dramatization. Events that were some years apart have been placed nearer together, but in essentials the play is historically true and nearly all the characters are historical personnages." Preface--A play in four acts for a cast of bout 36 or more. Stage suggestions." Another such play is "The Last of the Mohicans" in a book called Dramatization; selections from English classics adapted in dramatic form, by S. E. Simons and C. I. Orr, and published by Scott, Foresman. Miss Hazeltine says of this play: "Arranged from Cooper for High School use. A Prologue, Interludes and Epilogue cover events of the story not

included in the three scenes: The search, the council of the Delaware, and the parting. For 13 boys, 2 girls, and extras. Another play which might be produced by the High School History Club is The Land Where Lost Things Go, by Doris Halman, published by French, N. Y. and copyrighted in 1918. This play is a prize play of the Drama League of America patriotic play competition. Another prize patriotic play is Rachel T. Field's Rise Up, Jennine Smith, published by the same concern. The Drama League of Boston, has published a list of plays for amateurs. Among these are A Rose O'Plymouth Town, by Beulah M. Dix and Evelyn G. Sutherland, published by the Dram. Pub. Co., Chicago; In The Wake of Paul Revere, by Mrs. E. F. Guptill, Lebanon, Ohio; Nathan Hale, by Clyde Fitch, published by Baker, Boston; Valley Forge by Edward S. Lonfry, published by the Werner Publishing Co. The Drama League of America has published a list of plays for High School and College production among which it cites, Mackay, C. D., Patriotic Plays and Pageants for Young People, published by Holt. The Drama League says of this book: ""A series of one act plays which can be produced separately or in groups as pageants. They can be given out-of-doors or in-doors. Each play

deals with the youth of some American hero. Abraham Lincoln--Rail Splitter. Benjamin Franklin--Journeyman. The Boston Tea Party. Daniel Boone--Patriot. George Washington's Fortune. In Witchcraft Days. Marymount. Princess Pocahontas." Another play cited by the Drama League is Joan of Arc "Arranged by the Ursulines of St. Teresa's from Michlet's History of Joan of Arc, Schiller's Maid of Orleans and Ball's Joan of Arc. Excellent for high school. 1 hr., 10 men, 13 women, supers; published by Werner. Thyra Carter has written "A Thanksgiving Day Play" which is published in the Historical Outlook, Vol. 20, No. 7, Nov. '29. Miretta L. Bickford has written "An Evening in a Castle, a Playlet for Class Use" which was published in the Historical Outlook, vol. 19, No. 4, April, '28.

In almost every history class there are some pupils who have artistic ability. The teacher should encourage such pupils to illustrate their history material. Often times these pupils may in the beginning intensely dislike history but after being encouraged to supplement their history material,

and thus make it more meaningful for their less artistic classmates, these pupils may become very good history students. The best of their work may be exhibited in other school rooms, and if good enough might be placed in the public library.

Even the most ordinarily indifferent parents will turn out en masse if their children participate in any kind of public exhibition. An historical pageant offers a splendid opportunity for the largest possible number of pupils to take part, and in this way attract the largest possible number of the pupils' parents. Many times the pageant can be given in connection with the city's celebration of some particular event, or anniversary, and this connection would serve admirably to strengthen the school's relationship with the community. Sometimes members in the community have in their possession very old costumes which they would be willing to lend the school. The rest of the costumes may be made by the pupils themselves. If the pageant is to be produced on any great scale, it may be necessary for the school to call for aid from volunteers in the community, as was the case

in Lynn last summer on the celebration of its tercentary celebration when volunteers were asked to assemble in one of the schools and make wigs which the school children wore in the school exhibitions during the celebration. Constance D. Mackay, has written a book called Patriotic Plays and Pageants for Young People, published by Holt. In this is the "Pageant of Patriots" to be staged indoors of which Miss Hazeltine says: "The "Nation's youth" is seen portrayed in nine scenes and a prologue. From 50 to 200 boys and girls from 6 to 18 years of age. Some of the actual words of Lincoln, Washington and Franklin are used in the dialogue. Full directions." In the Historical Outlook for January, 1920 is published in detail "A Pageant Produced by Small Players" by Virginia E. Stone. I will produce here the program which the school printed, in order to give an idea of what the pageant is like.

A Pageant by
The Elementary School
Maryland State Normal, Towson

The Gift of The Ages

Prelude Processional

The Past

Columbia appears, followed by characters representing past and present.

Columbia speaks of the blessings of the present

and the gift of the ages.

The Present.

The Home--Grade 1

The Home and the Community--Grades 1, 2, 4, 5, 7.

The State--Grade 5.

The Nation--Grade 7

Fire--Grade 7

Tools--Grade 2

The Gift of the Middle Ages--Grade 6.

The Development of Trade

Greece

The Development of the Book.

The Age of Discovery--Grade 4

The Indians--Grade 4

Colonization--Grade 5

The Age of Progress--Grade 5

The Development of Government--Grade 7

The Plea to the Future

America

Columbia speaks of the promise of the future.

Prayer Song.

Recessional

Pageant written and staged by the children of the elementary school.

Music under direction of Miss Echchern, State Normal.

Dances under direction of Miss Cook, State Normal.

Programs printed by the Sixth Grade.

Chapter III

The Socializing Objective of History

We now come to a consideration of the second aim in history teaching, namely, the socializing objective. Pupils in school are too often prone to believe that the glories of history have been monopolized by one nation--the American nation--by one race--the white race--and by one section of the country--their section. There is much talk today of the patriotic objective in teaching history. History should and properly taught does arouse patriotism but the patriotism which a course in history should be of a very different type from that which those who talk so glibly of patriotism would cultivate. "Patriotism, in its narrow sense, is a mean attitude. Those who so conceive it regard patriotism as a force that makes for national egotism, with an overbearing nationalism that gives birth to suspicion and hate of all that is foreign. Patriotism must never become chauvinism. The intense nationalism which put Deutschland uber Alles was regarded as glorious patriotism in pre-war Germany. Patriotism must be regarded as a desire to perpetuate those principles of justice and humanity that control in the life of a nation. It must be an attitude of almost sacred regard for those who sacrifice them-

selves in the struggle for these principles that others may live happily under them. As such, patriotism develops rational humility rather than over bearing audaciousness."[14] At perhaps no age are students more narrow minded and unpatriotic (I am thinking of patriotism conceived in the broader sense just quoted) than they are when they have reached the junior and senior high school. Their outlook on life has necessarily been narrow, and they are actuated to work, not for the glory of the group, but for their own individual aggrandizement. This individualistic tendency, furthermore, has been fostered by teachers of all subjects. And many teachers of history who probably have copied in their notebooks this sentence from Johnson, history "has, in common with other subjects, been called upon to socialize the pupil, to counteract the selfish instincts natural to the young, to show that no one can live for himself alone, that each will live better for himself by living for others,"[15] continue to offer prizes in the form of high marks to the one who

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(14) Klapper, op. loc., pages 107-8

(15) Johnson, op. loc., page 185

writes the best term paper, or the one who finds the most references to some historical event. I am not inferring that prizes should not be given, but the way to attain the socializing aim in history is by encouraging the pupils to work for and with one another, to share with others some interesting fact which is not generally known, and not by carefully noting it in the history notebook to be passed in and read by the teacher alone.

A sense of mutual helpfulness in the classroom, might then be the first step in the socializing process. But oftentimes the spirit of broadmindeness, and mutual helpfulness engendered with so much difficulty by the teacher of history does not carry over into other classrooms, or if due to other teachers'zeal, it does become the entire school's watchword, too often it is left behind at the close of the school day to be resumed at the beginning of the next. In the meantime when these pupils come in contact with others not members of their school, they resume their old selfish, narrow attitudes. The problem, then, which faces the teacher of history is that of teaching history in such a way that not only

will his students be broad minded, loyal, and unselfish members of the school, but equally broad-minded, loyal, and unselfish members of their community, whose potential members they are.

The rest of this chapter will be devoted to a description of how the larger phase of this socializing objective can be carried out through relating the work of the school to community interests and needs. It may be argued that such a plan as is proposed would consume too much time, would not be taken seriously by the pupils, and would thus fail in its purpose. But it cannot be denied that in the past too much time has been spent on cut and dried facts which if they were taken seriously by the pupils at the moment were soon afterward forgotten. It is my belief that under a competent teacher, who has explained to the pupils the objectives of their community work, that not only will they take their work seriously, but will cover more ground than a class conducted in the old stereotyped way.

In the first place, the history club might decide that they could aid their community by starting a safety campaign. Members of the club could address

the entire school and explain the need and purpose of such a campaign. Such a campaign would not necessarily have to be confined to the usual "DON'T RUN OUT INTO THE STREET", "NEVER BOARD A MOVING CAR"type but could include several kinds of ways for promoting the welfare and safety of the community. Movies or slides, showing the dangers which lurk in an ordinary bottle of milk which, due to some person's carelessness may cause the lives of many, offer something a little different to a group of pupils. The school nurse might give a talk on the dangers which lurk in a little cut, and, using a member of the history club as a subject, she might demonstrate how to give first aid to an injured person. A member of the club might write a playlet which could be presented before the school and whose theme might be the misery which a widow and her children suffer, due to the negligence of the father during his life to provide for the rainy day by putting money in the bank and carrying life insurance. A fireman could also speak on how to prevent fires, and could give the pupils the figures which one fire costs the community. Safety first posters could be distributed around the city in conspicous places and the local newspaper could give

the campaign its hearty support.

In the second place, the history class might visit the various factories in the community. Co-operation is always shown in such places, and the teacher could point out to his pupils the necessity of having a working class, as well as a capitalist class. The students could note the conditions under which the people worked, and if they found them very unsatisfactory, they could help the laborers to procure better conditions.

In the third place, the pupils of the history class might launch a campaign for the beautifying of the city. The class might prepare a short history of the community, and, after bringing before the notice of the school, the high points in the history of the community, they could then suggest that with such a record of achievement behind it, it would be a shame to allow the community to continue in its present condition, and that a campaign to make the community a more pleasant and more wholesome place would be appropriate. The history class might then suggest that the school take the lead by tidying up and

beautifying the school building and its surrounding grounds.

In the Historical Outlook for November, 1927 Russell Colbert has written an article called "The High School History Museum", in which he shows the interest which can be built up between the school and community by means of a common interest. Not only will the community become interested in such a museum but the latter will also serve to make history more meaningful to teacher and pupils. The advantages which Mr. Colbert sees in such a museum are these: "In the first place the effect of the museum upon the teacher is worth while. It prevents "cut-and -dried" procedure to a great extent. Organization of material and subject matter for a lesson around an article from the history museum necessitates careful planning and thinking on the part of the teacher. Again, the effect of the history museum upon the student and the student body is indeed worth while. When the project is well organized and students grasp the intention and some of the broader possibilities of the work many of them become deeply interested in it. The best co-operation one receives in this work is usually from a group of wide awake students who help to arouse the interest of

the community. Such a group may usually be depended upon to ferret out the most worth while articles that the community has to offer. Often the dullest boy or girl in the class so far as the printed page in the history text is concerned may be aroused to a real interest in the subject by the sight of a bullet mold, a candle mold, a grease burner, a fine piece of hand weaving, or any one of dozens of other articles from the museum. The community interest which the history museum arouses is of great assistance to the school as a whole. Patrons and friends of the school see in it something tangible toward which the school is working and are usually glad to help. It is interesting to hear them refer to "our" museum, which certainly it is, because no one individual or small group of individuals can create a worth while museum."

The history teacher might suggest that the class visit the old people's home, and the history club might prepare a program of entertainment. Such a visit as this, would not only serve to make some old people happy, but would demonstrate to the pupils that the best way to obtain happiness for oneself is by making others happy. Such a lead as this taken by

a school club would serve to arouse the interest of other clubs and societies in the community, and the old people's home would come in for a good deal of attention it otherwise would not have received.

Similar in purpose, would be a visit by the history class to the hospitals of the community. Here there might be found some who would welcome a chance to study a little history, and members of the class might volunteer to visit the hospital from time to time and read to those who so desire it.

In some communities there are yearly drives for money to be devoted to a charitable purpose. These community drives offer a chance for the pupils to be of direct benefit to the community. If the pupils are not able to give any money themselves, they can always aid by inducing those who can afford to give generously, to do so.

In all these ways just enumerated, not only will the pupils have been of service to the community in making it a bigger and better place in which to live, but they will have aroused interest in the school. Community members who had been indifferent in the past will now begin to take some notice of the work which

the school is doing. They will find that not only is the school turning out as good history scholars as it did fifty years ago, but that it is turning out social-minded potential citizens of the community which is, after all, what the school is aiming to do.

Chapter IV

The Citizenship Objective of History

The biggest task which faces the American public school today is the turning out of a fine type of American citizenry. This task today is a far more significant and difficult one than it was say such a short time as forty years ago, due both to the widespread extent of the American democracy and the ever increasing demands made on education. Today more than at any other time in our history do we need to keep our feet on rock bottom and beware of the "fads" in education. The newer movements should not be allowed to tun away the attention of the American public school from its first and most important duty, namely, the making of good American citizens. How are we going about this task of making good American citizens? Are we going to tell him that it is his duty to do thus and so? Is this the way to go about this important task, this sacred duty of making good American citizens? Indeed it is not. "Clear thinking emanates only from practice in right acting."(16) There is a felt need for giving the embryo citizen in school some training, some

(16) Rugg, H. O.--"Do the Social Studies Prepare Pupils Adequately for Life Activities?"--Twenty-Second Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education, Part II

practical experience in the duties which will confront him when he becomes a citizen of the community. We have already seen that before a student can actively participate in the duties of a citizen, he must first of all know what constitutes the citizen's duties. It has been pointed out that the first objective in any history course would thus be one which aimed to give the student a background of historical information which would not only point out to him his duties as a good citizen, but would also influence him to accept his duties in a spirit of co-operation and respect for the rights and privileges of others. If this aim is properly carried out the pupils are now ready to actually practice being citizens, and since the pupils are going to be future citizens of their community, the best way to give them practice in acquiring the attitudes and ideals of worthy citizens is by closely relating the work of the school to the interests and needs of the community.

The rest of this chapter will be devoted to showing how the integration of the school and community can bring about the attainment of the citizenship objective of the teacher of history.

It is an accepted conclusion today that the reason for much inefficiency in office is because citizens have not learned to discriminate between desirable and undesirable candidates. People vote for candidates for all kinds of absurd reasons--some because they belong to the same race--others because they belong to the same church. Many voters are influenced solely by the press, while others cast their ballot for the same candidate for whom their particular friend is voting. Professor Jernegan says on this point, "It is true that we are inclined to believe what we see in print. The American public has the reputation for being easily misled by unsupported assertions and claims; proper historical teaching might even produce an electorate that will look over the pages of history for light on the conduct of statesmen."(17) If then the potential citizen of the community is not to commit the mistakes of his elders, it is very essential that he be given definite training in the selection of those to whom responsibility and authority is given. At the very beginning of the year when the officers of the history club are to be

(17) Quoted in Wirth, op. loc.

chosen, the pupils should note first of all the characteristics demanded by the nature of the office. Next, they should determine all pupils who seemingly fulfill all requirements for the office. Finally, the pupils will have to decide which of these would fulfill the duties of that office better than any other of the candidates. To be sure this is no easy task, and very likely one of the candidates which the pupils chose will fail. The failure, however, will soon be demonstrated by the inability of the pupil elected to carry out his duties efficiently. If he fails to resign, he should be removed by vote of the pupils themselves. Later on in the course when the students are studying the various presidential elections, the teacher could suggest to the pupils that they hold a mock election right in their classroom. This procedure would not only help the pupils to better understand the way election machinery functions, but the very fact of having in their classroom the candidates described in the textbook, the actual casting of the ballots, and the official announcement of the winner, would serve to give the pupils a live interest and a desire to participate in a real election. The history club could even stage a mock election in the school auditorium just before the time for a regular community

election. Such an affair, entirely sponsored by the pupils themselves, would attract the attention of the members of the community, and individuals who perhaps other wise would not have been interested enough to vote at the real election, may get the proper spirit. The pupils could make posters urging the citizens of the community to turn out on election day, and the history club might stage a play the theme of which concerns the misfortunes which befell a town due to the indifference and neglect of its citizens to put the proper people in office. For further information about holding mock elections see: Shay, Russell, L. "A Mock Nominating Convention"--Historical Outlook--Vol. 20, No. 6, Oct. '29; Hackett, Roger C.--"A Mock National Convention"--Historical Outlook--Nov. '28, Vol. 19, No. 7.

A great many schools have some type of student self government, and if the teacher of history finds that in his school, there has as yet been no attempt made to give these future citizens any practice in the carrying on of duties which later in life they must assume, then that teacher should do all in his

power to induce those in charge to allow the pupils some share in the responsibilities which it is imperative that they know how to bear.

Schools have sponsored all kinds of campaigns from time to time. Special weeks have been set aside for thrift, for music, for beautifying the community, all of which are vastly important in making the community a more desirable place in which to live, but none of which is as important in fostering right civic attitudes as one about which we hear little if anything. Why not have an "OBEY THE LAW WEEK?" Surely in these days of open contempt of traffic regulations to say nothing of the scorn with which the eighteenth amendment to the constitution is regarded, there is great need to instill in the hearts of these young citizens, these potential citizens of their community a deep and abiding respect for the law. Oftentimes officials in a community are unsupported by those who put them into office, perhaps because the community members do not know the difficulties or the duties of these officials. During this "OBEY THE LAW WEEK", the history club could invite members of the police department, the fire department, city council, and others to address the school. The purpose of their lecture should be

clearly presented to them beforehand, and an open invitation should be issued to the community at large. Not only should the pupils hear about the duties of these officials, but they should be given a chance to see the officials at their duties.

All good American citizens are truly interested in Americanization, that "process by which racial differences are superseded by national unity."(18) But unfortunately, the attitude of a great many people toward the newly landed foreignere is one of open contempt it not downright hostility. To be sure, we set up classes in Americanization, but before foreigners will have the desire to come to these classes, they must be convinced of the benefits they will receive from being citizens of the United States. The members of the history class can do much to make the aliens in their community want to become naturalized citizens. In the first place, this particular club can make it an established principle that foreign members should be treated with the highest respect, and anyone found violating this principle should be severly reprimanded. In the second place, the history club might set aside one night a month as guest night for all the foreign

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(18) Almack, op. loc., page 253

women in the community. On this night, some of the members of the club might undertake to give these women a little instruction in our American ways and customs. This should by no means be undertaken in a formal manner, nor should it be continued if it is seen that these women resent it. A pageant showing the contribution of all nations to the building up of the American nation would also aid in building up a friendship between the aliens and the other members of the community. If a community center does not already exist, the history class should be instrumental in getting one established. The aims of the community center are cogently expressed by Almack. "The community center is both a social and an educational enterprise. It furnishes a meeting place, forum, library, recreation center, and theater. It aims to do for the adult what the school should do for the children: to develop leadership in the diffident, to direct the officious, to discover talent, to teach cooperation, to build up respect for rules and law, and to develop self-control. The freedom of association which the association offers is a strong influence in breaking down isolation, removing prejudice, and building up a feeling of fraternity and good will."(19) From time to time

(19) Almack, Op. loc., page 260

community center programs should be given. Almack has described one of these programs in detail in his book which I think is worthy of being described rather fully here as this is the sort of thing which I believe will bring the school and community together in a spirit of mutual understanding and good will.

"In a city of about thirty-five thousand people, with a large number of foreign colonies, a general get-together project was planned. Its object was to bring about a better understanding and appreciation among the different nationalities. The means chosen was an all-day and evening folk festival, each group contributing whatever it could.

The Japanese Association managed the Japanese exhibit. The Portuguese appointed one of their leaders to make all arrangements for them. A local Parent-Teacher Association assumed the responsibility of planning the Scandinavian contribution. The Italian women of the Longfellow School cooked the luncheon, and the women of the Grant School served it. A dancing academy donated their hall for the evening. The Ladies Aid of the Presbyterian Church gave the use of the kitchen and dining-room for the luncheon. The

Knights of Columbus furnished their hall for the exhibit, and Boy Scouts saw that articles sent in for exhibit purposes were cared for.

Many of the general organization duties were cared for by the home teachers and the evening school teachers. This group met every two weeks, and invited the appointment of cooperative committees. Local foreign associations or well-known representatives assumed charge of the exhibits. The home teachers gathered together much material as they visited the homes.

The cooperation was everything that could be dewished. The exhibit was varied and attractive. Screens for the booths were supplied by the high school. The art department made the large posters which were put up all about the city. The newspapers gave space generously.

Twelve groups had exhibits: Italians, Portuguese, Scandinavians, Slavs, French, German, Irish, Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, and the United States. The program was representative. At the Italian luncheon, Richard V. Bressani gave a splendid address. Jerome Damonte delighted with accordion music. Eugene Steffani sang. At the evening program an address on the arts and crafts of Japan was given by the Japanese Consul. The boys of the Grant School furnished orchestra music;

the pupils from the Gardner School entertained with costume dances and songs, as did the girls from the Washington School. The Portuguese were represented by Mr. Ruggeiro, who sang several solos; Mrs. Gomez danced to the castanets, and sang "La Paloma"; Miss Combatalade sang the "Marseillaise" in French. The boys' club of the Grant School had charge of the dance. Mr. Damonte played accordion music for this, in true Italian style.

A charge of $1.25 was made for the luncheon and the dance. The large sum realized was set aside to buy music, books, and special equipment for the branch evening schools. The aim of the festival was not to raise money, but it was felt that all would prefer to contribute something to the community center enterprise."(20)

Surely after such an entertainment as the one just described, there should be a spirit of good fellowship between all classes and races in that community.

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(20) Almack, op. loc.

The aims of history teaching are both numerous and varied, and many of the values which people claim they receive from a study of history may be obtained from the study of some other subject in the curriculum. The three aims discussed here can be justified. A knowledge of history is fundamental, for one must study the past in order to understand the present, and it is only by an acquaintance with the facts of history that one can acquire the broad and liberal concepts of life, and the proper civic attitudes and ideals which make up the other two objectives of history teaching. The acquisition of historical knowledge should not be a cut-and-dried procedure but can be made both effective and interesting to the pupils and beneficial to the community through proper motivation which permits of integration of school and community.

One's concepts of life are broadened not by passively hearing the teacher say that the reading of pages 1-100 will tend to make the class become broad-minded, loyal and unselfish students, but through actual participation in community life where one will see how people of other races, colors, creeds and social class live, and by helping this community to become a better and healthier one.

Only through actual participation in the duties which, as potential citizens of their community they will have to perform, will pupils in school learn how to become good American citizens. The history class can be conducted so that not only will the pupils get practice in performing the duties of citizens, but citizens of the community will also be instructed how to perform their citizenship duties more effectively. And by good example the history class can encourage those alien members of the community to become citizens.

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